

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents

FROM: Suzette S. Lee, Interim Director
Office of Instructional Promising Practices

DATE: August 10, 2007

RE: ACT/SAT Improvement

Listed below is information about the state-funded ACT/SAT improvement program for the 2007-08 school year. Please share it with the appropriate staff in your districts. If you have any questions about this information, please contact me at 803-734-6103 or slee@ed.sc.gov. We wish you well in your efforts to improve ACT/SAT scores!

ACT/SAT District Contact

To ensure that each district is informed about this year's ACT/SAT improvement initiative and actively involved in the process, we invite you to identify a district ACT/SAT contact. If possible, please select a staff member who is directly involved in the district's instructional program at the high school level. Please email my assistant, Sheila Boykin, at sboykin@ed.sc.gov by August 31, 2007, with the following information:

- Name of District
- Name of ACT/SAT Contact
- Current Position
- Email Address

2007-08 State-funded Grade Ten PLAN/PSAT Testing Program

As part of the state's efforts to assist districts/schools in improving ACT/SAT scores, the Education Accountability Act requires that South Carolina public schools provide all tenth graders the opportunity to participate in either the PLAN or the PSAT/NMSQT assessment. Per Proviso 1A.57. (SDE-EIA: PSAT/PLAN Reimbursement), the SDE will fund either the PLAN or PSAT for all grade ten students in the 2007-08 fiscal year.

ACT's PLAN Assessment

Listed below are the materials and services each district will receive if it chooses to administer the PLAN:

Materials

- Student Assessment Set (one per student as ordered)
 - PLAN Test Booklet
 - PLAN Answer Folder
 - *Instructions for Completing Your Answer Folder*
- *Why Take PLAN* (one copy per student as ordered)
- *Spanish edition of Why Take PLAN* (quantities as ordered)
- *Test Content and Sample Test Questions* (one copy per student)
- Administrators Folder
 - *Administrator's Manual*
 - *Directions for Testing*
 - Promotional posters (2 "large" and 10 "small")
 - Pre-ID Order form
- *Directions for Testing* (one for every test staff person as ordered)
- South Carolina Fee Transmittal Form (one per school)

(Note: Schools/districts that used PLAN in the 2006-07 school year should have received ordering information from ACT in May 2007. As explained in that information, schools/districts should order PLAN materials directly from ACT using the new online PLAN Online Ordering System (www.act.org/plan). If you are a new customer, you are to use this online ordering system as well.

Reporting Services to Schools

- Student Score Report (two per student)
- Student Score Label (two per student)
- *Using Your PLAN Results* (one per student)
- Spanish edition of *Using Your PLAN Results* (quantities are requested on School Header)
- List Report (one per school)
- School Profile Summary Report with Intervention Rosters and Presentation Packet (for schools testing 25 or more tenth graders)
- School Item-Response Summary Report (for schools testing 25 or more tenth graders)
- College Readiness Standards Information Service (for schools testing 25 or more tenth graders)

(Note: Districts with two or more schools testing with PLAN may purchase District Profile Summary Reports and/or Item-Response Summary Reports at the standard fee. District reports are not considered part of the standard reporting services provided under this agreement.)

Workshops and Consultative Services

Workshops and services to enhance the interpretation and use of PLAN results are available to schools, districts, consortia, and other organizations in South Carolina. Staff in the ACT Atlanta field office, in coordination with the SDE, provides these services to schools, districts, SC ITV, and/or SC ETV personnel. Please note that the

SDE will host a series of workshops in early 2008 after districts/schools have received their PLAN results.

College Board's PSAT/NMSQT

Listed below are the deliverables and services that each district will receive if it orders the **PSAT/NMSQT**:

Standard PSAT/NMSQT Program Deliverables

- Large promotional color poster to encourage participation
- PSAT/NMSQT student guides including complete practice test
- PSAT/NMSQT test booklets and answer folders
- PSAT/NMSQT Supervisor's Manual (as many as needed)
- PSAT/NMSQT—The Parent Perspective (English and Spanish-one master copy of each per school)
- PSAT/NMSQT—Score Report Tutorial for Parents (English and Spanish-one master copy of each per school)
- PSAT/NMSQT Score Report Tutorial for Younger Students (9th and 10th graders)
- PSAT/NMSQT Score Report Plus (two copies per student)
- PSAT/NMSQT score labels
- PSAT/NMSQT Test Question Detail report with complete skills listing
- *2007 Official Educator's Guide to the PSAT/NMSQT* (one per school)
- *ScoreWrite: A Guide to Preparing for the SAT Essay* (one per school with teacher training DVD free on request)
- 2007 PSAT/NMSQT Official Educator Guide to Resources and Next Steps (one copy per school) with Destination College collection DVD free on request
- School-level Summary Reports (one per school; available for schools testing at least 50 sophomores and 50 juniors. All other schools receive statistical summary reports.)
- School-level Summary of Answers and Skills (SOAS) Reports (for schools testing at least 25 students in a grade)
- School-level AP Potential access (online tool for identifying additional students for AP courses)
- My College QuickStart access, including an interactive online score report with complete answer explanations; personalized SAT study plans; personalized college, career, and major searches including a personality profile to help the undecided
- Multiple online-resources for helping prior to the test as well as for understanding score reports and other tools after the test (typically in PowerPoint or PDF formats)

Early Participation Program Deliverables

- Unused test fees waived for all participating schools
- District-level AP Potential access for multi-high school districts
- District -level Summary of Answers and Skills report for multi-high school districts
- District-level system Summary Report for multi-high school districts

(Note: The participating schools represent the 108 high schools, with tenth grade participating in 2006-07.)

If your district plans to participate in the state-funded PLAN or PSAT/NMSQT program, you will need to complete an online order verification form by August 31, 2006. Please note that this is not an order form; it is a verification form. You must order either the PLAN or the PSAT/NMSQT from ACT or the College Board, respectively. **We are hopeful that the online verification form will be posted to the SDE Web page by Monday, August 13, 2007. As soon as it is up on the Web, we will notify each District Test Coordinator (DTC) with information about accessing it.** Please note that we are asking the district test coordinator to complete this form to ensure that this grade 10 testing is an integral part of the district's total assessment program.

To assist the DCTs in completing the online verification form, attached is a form that contains all of the information they will have to input via the Web.

EXPLORE

In addition to the grade ten PLAN/PSAT testing program, last year, the SDE funded EXPLORE, the first assessment in ACT's EPAS/Educational Planning and Assessment System, for all students in grades nine or ten. We requested funding from the General Assembly to fund EXPLORE again this year; however, we did not receive it. We are trying to secure funding from another source and should know next week as to whether or not we will be able to do this. In the meantime, since EXPLORE test booklets are reusable, those districts/schools who ordered the assessment last year, may use it this school year. If we do not secure funding and you want to administer EXPLORE, you will have to pay for the answer sheets and scoring.

SAT-Prep

In collaboration with this office, the South Carolina Virtual School (SCVS) will be offering an SAT Prep course **free** to any student in the state who is enrolled in the tenth grade or above in a South Carolina public school and has completed or is currently taking Geometry. Although the course does not begin until September 2007, **students may now register for the course.** To register, students will need to go to the SCVS website at <http://www.blackboard.ed.sc.gov> and click on the student tab. If you have questions about this virtual SAT Prep course, please contact Dee Appleby, Director of the Office of eLearning, at the SDE, at 803-734-7169 or dappleby@ed.sc.gov.

cc: Associate Superintendents for Curriculum and Instruction
District Test Coordinators
High School Principals
High School Guidance Counselors